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Viewing cable 09QUITO708, ECUADORIAN MILITARY REQUESTS MUNITIONS DESTRUCTION

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Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

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If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#09QUITO708**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09QUITO708	2009-08-07 21:49	2011-08-30 01:44	SECRET//NOFORN	Embassy Quito

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.eluniverso.com/2011/04/14/1/1355/cable-220007.html>

VZCZCXYZ0003
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHQT #0708/01 2192149
ZNY SSSSS ZZH
O 072149Z AUG 09 (CCY-CLASSIFICATION-MSI4897)
FM AMEMBASSY QUITO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0737
INFO RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 8305
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 4247
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 3673
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ AUG LIMA 3355
RUEHGL/AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL 4546
RHMFISS/USSOUTHAF DAVIS MONTHAN AFB AZ
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUEADWD/SECARMY WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC 2285
RHMFISS/HQ USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RHMFISS/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL

S E C R E T QUITO 000708

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (CHANGE CLASSIFICATION)
NOFORN
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: TWENTY YEARS
TAGS: [MARR](#) [MASS](#) [MCAP](#) [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [KHDP](#) [EC](#) [CO](#)
SUBJECT: ECUADORIAN MILITARY REQUESTS MUNITIONS DESTRUCTION
ASS...

id: 220007
date: 8/7/2009 21:49
refid: 09QUITO708
origin: Embassy Quito
classification: SECRET//NOFORN
destination: 09QUITO138
header:
VZCZCXYZ0003
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHQT #0708/01 2192149
ZNY SSSSS ZZH
O 072149Z AUG 09 (CCY-CLASSIFICATION-MSI4897)
FM AMEMBASSY QUITO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0737
INFO RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 8305
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 4247
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 3673
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ AUG LIMA 3355
RUEHGL/AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL 4546
RHMFISS/USOUTHAF DAVIS MONTHAN AFB AZ
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUEADWD/SECARMY WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC 2285
RHMFISS/HQ USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RHMFISS/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL

----- header ends -----

S E C R E T QUITO 000708

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (CHANGE CLASSIFICATION)
NOFORN
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: TWENTY YEARS
TAGS: [MARR](#) [MASS](#) [MCAP](#) [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [KHDP](#) [EC](#) [CO](#)
SUBJECT: ECUADORIAN MILITARY REQUESTS MUNITIONS DESTRUCTION
ASSISTANCE

REF: A. HOTR IIR 6 828 0421 09
 1B. HOTR IIR 6 828 0329 09
 1C. HOTR IIR 6 828 0327 09
 1D. QUITO 138

Classified By: Ambassador Heather M. Hodges for Reasons 1.4 (b&d)

1. SUMMARY: (C) The Ecuadorian government seeks USG assistance in destroying at least 33 MANPADS and almost 1 million individual missiles, firearms, bombs and other expired munitions under the auspices of the U.S. Small Arms/Light Weapons Destruction Program. After years of inconclusive discussion with the GOE, its recent requests for destruction of arms and munitions, as well as an explosion last month at an arms factory, present a rare opportunity to engage Ecuador on such cooperation. Embassy Quito invites the Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement (WRA) and the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) to visit Ecuador to assess Ecuador's stockpile of arms and munitions. END SUMMARY

DESTRUCTION REQUESTS

2. (SBU) In an official memorandum dated June 19, 2009, but not received until July 23, 2009, Joint Command chief General Fabian Varela Moncayo indicated that the Ecuadorian Armed Forces (Army, Navy and Air Force) would like to pursue cooperation in munitions destruction and provided an

extensive list of firearms and munitions to be destroyed. General Varela's Deputy, General Gonzalo Meza Hernandez, indicated to the Defense Attache on July 27, 2009 that the Ecuadorian Armed Forces had additional MANPADS that could potentially be destroyed. However, per the June 19 memorandum, the GOE destruction list includes:

- 33 MANPADS (IGLA);
- 640,986 individual munitions, including grenades, bullets and cartridges;
- 11,185 bombs and fuses;
- 139 missiles;
- 6,549 rockets;
- 293,050 aerial munitions;
- 160 counter measures (Squibs TP1 CHAFF and TP2 FLARE);
- 91 lbs. of pentolite powder; and
- 41,556 grenades, cartridges, and other munitions.

¶3. (S/NF) In addition to the above memorandum, the Embassy's Military Group received an official memorandum from the Joint Command dated March 16, 2009, requesting training in the handling, storage and transport of munitions and explosive ordinance disposal (EOD). The memo said that the GOE was implementing a new project) "Protection and Security of the Civil Population and the Storage and Handling of Military Munitions and Explosives." The Military Group received another official memo from the Joint Command dated April 8, 2009, requesting a technical visit by the USG to the GOE's principal storage facilities, explosives labs, and other installations that would allow the USG to evaluate what technology and training would be necessary to implement the GOE project. On April 15, 2009, members of the Defense Attache Office (DAO) received briefings on the Joint Command's overall strategy as defined in the above mentioned project. DAO personnel also visited Ecuadorian Army and Air Force storage sites, and determined that approximately 90 percent of all Ecuadorian munitions have exceeded their service life (Ref B and C).

¶4. (S/NF) The official memoranda from the Joint Command also included a request for technical assistance and training that is currently being considered by the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA). The possibility of weapons reduction also may be presented by PM/WRA to the GOE as part of a package proposal to include destruction, improved storage bunkers, and training on munitions testing. It should be noted, however, that the GOE may be sensitive about the idea of removal of weapons and munitions if any connection is made to exclusive USG access to the testing of those weapons.

GOE EXPRESSES INTEREST IN HUMANITARIAN DEMINING COOPERATION

¶5. (C) During the Ambassador's and WHA/AND Deputy Director Andy Bowen's July 24 meeting to discuss the U.S-Ecuador Bilateral Dialogue, MFA Director General of Sovereignty Affairs Bolivar Torres suggested that humanitarian demining be added to Dialogue agenda. Under Secretary of Sovereignty Affairs Claudia Donoso told us on July 31 that the MFA would like to request humanitarian demining assistance from the U.S. for Ecuador's humanitarian demining program along its southern border. Pursuant to our previous discussions with PM/WRA, Embassy Quito will seek to obtain a formal request from the MFA to initiate the process of assessing potential cooperation in humanitarian demining.

NEED FOR ASSESSMENT VISIT BY PM/WRA AND DTRA

¶6. (C) The Embassy would welcome a visit by PM/WRA and DTRA in late August to perform an assessment of Ecuador's munitions and MANPADS for destruction, storage, and potential removal. The GOE has not estimated the total financial assistance needed to destroy these firearms and munitions. Therefore, a visit by PM/WRA and DTRA would be helpful to determine the extent of the cost involved in destruction, as well as the cost to transport any firearms and munitions from their current sites to destruction or future storage sites. The Embassy will schedule meetings with the primary contact in the Ecuadorian Armed Forces, Vice Chief of Defense General

Gonzalo Meza, as well as with relevant officials at the MFA. The Embassy will also arrange for visits to the Ecuadorians Armed Forces' bunkers and storage facilities.

COMMENT

¶7. (S/NF) The recent requests by the Ecuadorian military for destruction assistance and training present an opportunity not open to us in recent memory. A request directly from the Chief of the Armed Forces also demonstrates a political willingness not previously encountered, at least under the current administration. The July 7, 2009 explosion at the Santa Barbara munitions factory in Sangolqui, on the outskirts of Quito (Ref A) heightened the GOE's awareness of the dangers of its current storage capacity. This has perhaps also increased the GOE's willingness to pursue cooperation at this time. Most of the firearms and munitions listed are held by the Ecuadorian Army, which had previously been reluctant to consider destruction of munitions. The June 19 destruction list is the first time the GOE has specified what items it would like to destroy. Although the list only includes a limited number of MANPADS, it is possible more could be included in an ultimate agreement. However, it is important to move forward on the listed munitions as they pose a risk of falling into hands of the FARC, as a result of theft or potential sale by a corrupt official, and therefore represent a potential threat to U.S. or Colombian forces. (End Comment)

¶8. (U) POCs for this request is Embassy Quito Political-Military Officer Mark Pannell, telephone: 011-593-2-398-5502, e-mail: PannellMA@state.sgov.gov, Air Attache Col Tom Thompson, telephone: 011-593-2-398-5384; e-mail: Thomas.Thompson@dia.smil.mil, or Military Group Commander COL Robert Gaddis, telephone: 011-593-2-398-5387, e-mail: Robert.Gaddis@tcsc.southcom.smil.mil.

¶9. (U) This message has been cleared by Mark W. Adams, Senior Advisor, Conventional Weapons Destruction, PM/WRA.

HODGES

=====CABLE ENDS=====